

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 9, 2021

MDCP Merit Review Panel Members
International Trade Administration
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear MDCP Merit Review Panel Members:

I write to express my strong support for the application submitted by the New Hampshire Department of Business and Economic Affairs (BEA) to be a part of the 2021 Market Development Cooperator Program. The State would implement a program to assist New Hampshire businesses by strengthening their capacity to use digital tools to identify customers and opportunities internationally. This venture would help businesses not only recover from COVID-19, but also remain competitive in a global marketplace that continues to embrace technology.

A wealth of information exists from the International Trade Administration (ITA) and other government agencies, including the U.S. Small Business Administration and private sources, to educate businesses on how to develop a successful digital strategy. This knowledge is critical to companies navigating the nuances of culture and customs when developing outreach to target consumers in foreign markets, counseling related to access of eCommerce portals and connecting to service providers in the eCommerce marketplace.

The State seeks to build on these resources by helping Granite State exporters take advantage of these existing services and fund connections with third-party service providers. New Hampshire businesses would receive guidance throughout the entire process of analyzing and improving their digital strategy, implementing a plan and ensuring that companies are ready to take advantage of the reach of the International Trade Administration in generating sales. This project would be valuable for New Hampshire exporters and assist companies that would benefit from time and resource support.

The Department of Business and Economic Affairs is capable of developing and executing this project. BEA has a close relationship with the U.S. Commercial Service in Portsmouth and has demonstrated its capacity to establish and run programs aimed at assisting businesses, particularly in the digital space. The Department established the *Go eGlobal* program, using grants facilitated through the U.S. Small Business Administration, to help companies with website development, localization and search engine optimization when COVID-19 closed down in-person international trade shows and missions. Early results indicate that some of the 24 participating New Hampshire businesses have already reported exports sales because of this support.

Participation in the 2021 Market Development Cooperator Program will enable BEA to expand its efforts to support New Hampshire goods and services exporters. I strongly support this application and urge favorable consideration of this worthy proposal. If you have any questions, please contact Jon Jarvis from my staff at (603) 647-7500.

Sincerely,



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator